Conference and Events Manager

Role

Day to day responsibility for leading the College’s conference and events activities for Fellows, students, guests, staff and visitors.

Job description

The Conference and Events Manager will report to the Operations Manager and lead a team of conference staff to fulfil the objectives of the College’s conference activities. The post holder will work with their team to seek out and maximise sales and revenue opportunities to ensure the offer is developed and maintained to the highest level of income, quality and service.

Key duties and responsibilities

• Maximise sales opportunities on a day to day basis to ensure a high return rate on enquiries.

• Lead the Conference and Events Department and line manage your team. You will create a great environment for your team to work. You will recruit talented and enthusiastic people; driving performance through setting strong objectives, arranging staff training, monitoring and supporting development and conducting appraisals.

• Ensure the conference team work in a safe, secure and compliant environment whilst fulfilling health and safety obligations including safety of guests at conferences and events (see Health and safety section).

• Take an active role in design, improvement and development of areas in the College that will help grow conference business.

• Oversee the audit of data and successful implementation of systems and processes to ensure departmental compliance with the GDPR.

• Actively promote Selwyn’s conference facilities to internal customers (staff, students and Fellows).

• Ensure strong, effective working relationships are maintained with all College departments, particularly with the Accommodation Officer, Catering, Housekeeping, Maintenance and the Porters’ Lodge, keeping them informed of all matters which may affect them, including comments from customer feedback.

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• Develop and continuously improve all digital and social media opportunities to grow the business, including the conference area of the College website.

• Maintain an active relationship with “Meet Cambridge” to review current conferencing trends and developments. Be aware of current marketing trends and source appropriate advertising opportunities, to grow the business.

• Maintain professional knowledge and personal development, undertaking additional training as appropriate.

• Undertake any other duties required by the Operations Manager within the scope of the post.

Finance and planning

• Complete the Conference and Events Department annual operating budgets with the support of the Operations Manager and Finance Manager, growing sales, keeping track of performance; controlling costs and approved spends throughout the year.

• Maximise revenue from all external bookings, liaising and negotiating with clients as necessary, and ensuring all requirements are appropriately charged.

• Develop a 5 Year Conference and Events plan and marketing strategy, setting out the vision and implement actions to fulfil the outcomes of this plan.

• Liaise with the Operations Manager, Catering Manager, Head Housekeeper and Finance Manager to set annual prices, ensuring that all publications are updated and all members of staff apply the approved pricing structures.

• Develop a growing client database and ensure relationships are maintained with both new and existing clients, managing feedback and following up opportunities to improve the offer and maximise return visits.

• Prepare regular reports on conference income and forecasted business.

Health & safety

• Complete risk assessments for the Conference & Catering Office, and all conference and events, and marketing events. Annually review risk assessment and update as necessary.

• Prepare Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) for any conference guests and visitors with disabilities, and ensure copies are provided to delegates and the Head Porter.

• Ensure staff follow correct DSE and manual handling practices.

• Ensure health and safety or maintenance concerns are reported and appropriate action is taken.

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• Ensure conference delegates and visitors receive first aid (as required) and any accidents/near misses which occur within College premises are recorded.

• Ensure the Prevent procedure is used when taking new bookings. Ensure that all members of the team are aware and all new members of staff receive appropriate Prevent training.

These duties may change from time to time in consultation with the post holder, to reflect the needs of the College.

Person specification

Essential:

• Educated to A-Level standard or equivalent, or significant relevant experience in the hospitality sector
• Excellent communication and influencing skills
• Excellent organisational and time-management skills
• Ability to manage a team of staff to meet objectives while working to deadlines
• Confidence in planning and decision making while under pressure
• Good IT skills, including MS Office software packages: Word, Excel and Outlook
• Self-motivation and a flexible and positive attitude and approach to work

Desirable:

• Educated to degree level or equivalent
• Experience at management level, especially in a conferencing or hospitality setting
• A recognised management or administration qualification
• Experience in conference and event planning, especially in a University/College setting
• Experience in the use of room booking/venue management software

Where you fit into the structure